

TIPS & TRICKS

Photography



Chevy Memories

Photographer Jimmy Brown

After a hiatus of some 40 years Jimmy has once again taken up photography and showcases his fine art showing that time has no bearing on abilities.

ISSUE FIVE

Bird Photography

Spring is in the air and the birds are showing back up. No better chance to try out some bird photography.

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Starting to see dust in your images. Take a look at these tips for cleaning your sensor and keeping it clean.

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Trap Focusing Experiment

A not very well known technique to capturing a subject.

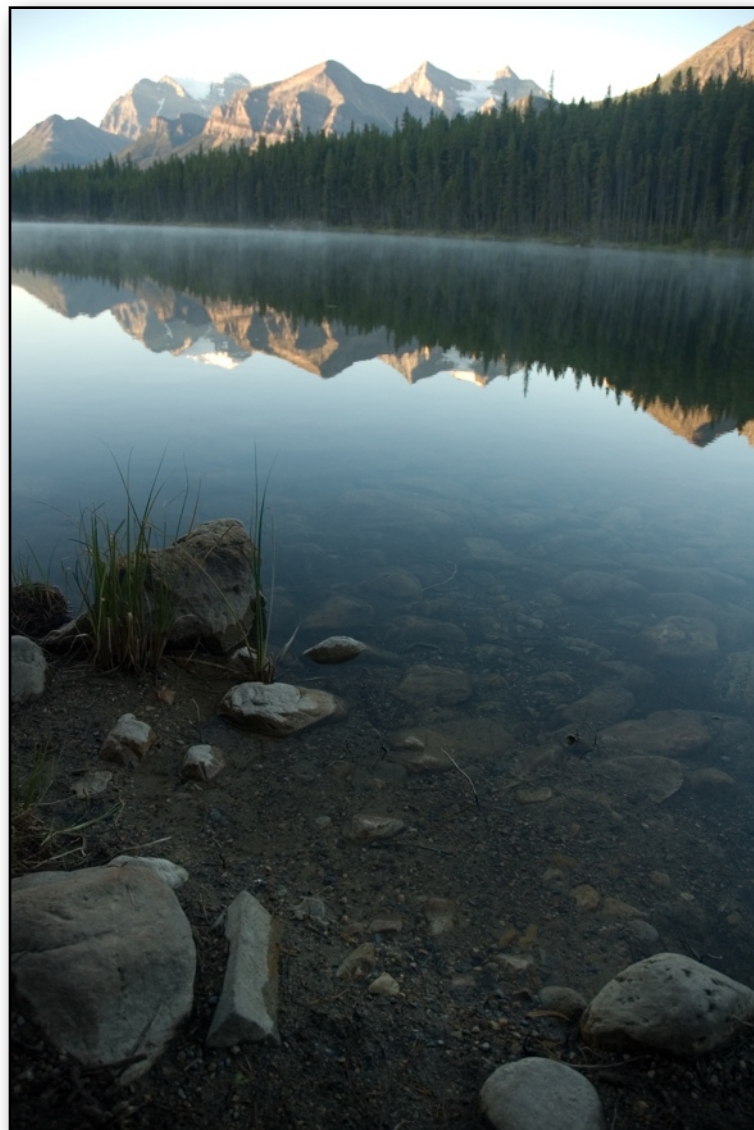
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What a Cover!

Jimmy Brown was chosen for this issues cover and after seeing the his photo how could it not make the cover. After a hiatus of 40 years Jimmy has gotten back into photography and is back creating great photography, for Chevy Memories, Jimmy used photoshop to add sepia toning and lens flares to really bring out the nostalgic feel that the photo radiates. We would like to thank Jimmy for submitting a great shot and hope to see more from him and YOU in the future! If you would like to submit photos for next issues cover please send them to

tipsandtricksphotography@gmail.com

For those who have submitted photos we have not forgotten them and they will be considered for next issue and if you have anymore great shots for the cover send them along.



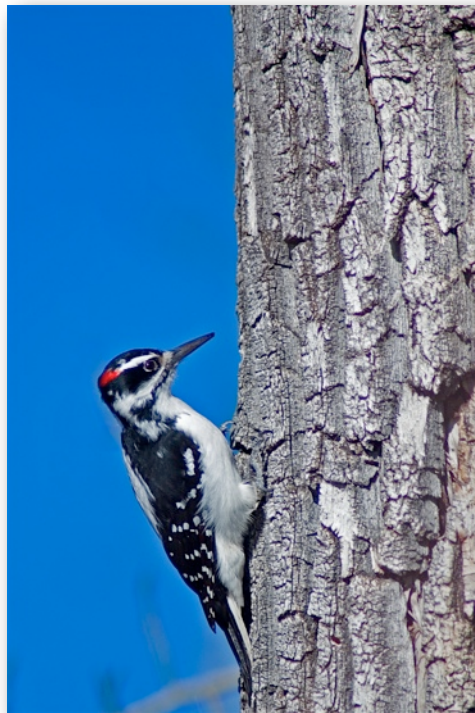
Bird Photography

Written by Jeff Tindall

Well despite the recently cold weather in Ontario, Canada spring is upon us and so begins the migration of birds. Bird photography can be a very peaceful serene experience, with the birds chirping, the warm morning sun radiating and enhancing their plumage and all types of behaviour from birds in flight, fishing, or perching. However, as nice as that picture seems, bird photography can also be the most irritating, frustrating time as well when birds are quiet and hiding, birds don't show up or they just won't do what your hoping they would have.

In my early attempts at shooting birds (figuratively!) the latter experience tended to happen more. Recently, I have begun changing my

views and following a more relaxed view of photographing birds by not really caring about what shows up but just shooting what ever comes along. My thoughts now are that birds no matter what type are amazing creatures and completely worthy of my time in learning about them.



I think one of the biggest problems I had with photographing birds was that the majority of my shots the bird was barely even noticeable and made up about 5% of the total photo. Now although it seems logical if your main subject is a bird you likely going to want to use a good telephoto lens. I was using my 70-300 mm zoom full-out and still not getting subjects in the frame. It never really occurred to me before but a lot of birds are incredible small. Now if your lucky enough to have a 1000 mm lens to use all the more power to you, however I imagine the majority of readers are in the same situation as me, with a couple of lenses with the maximum focal length of about 200 to 300 mm.

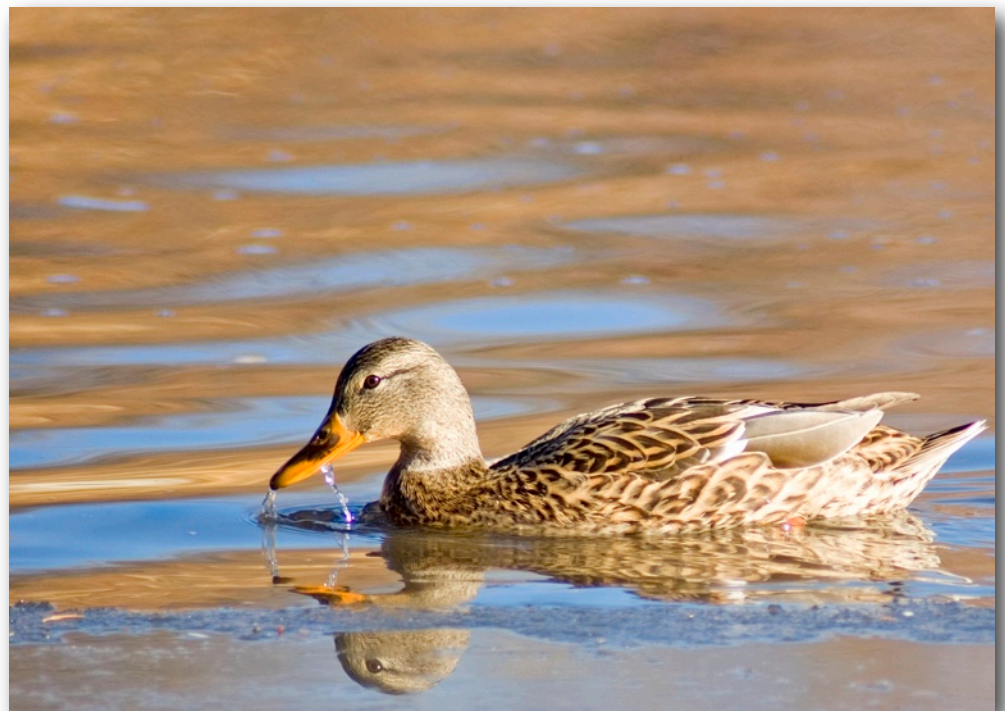


In our case you can still get great bird photographs but it requires a little more thought and work. One of the first things to figure out is what type of bird you want to photograph, because different birds are different sizes. If you decide to go take pictures of herons, geese or swans, then you're likely able to use your 200 mm lens more effectively and fill the frame then photographing a hummingbird or warbler.

When I want to go and do some bird photography I first ask myself the question, do I want to just get some good bird pictures (i.e. I don't really care too much about the species of bird) or do I want to specifically photograph a

certain species. The first option allows you a wide variety of options, whereas specific birds, although they may have been chosen because of their bright colourful plumage, may be much tougher to locate. If I decide on the first

option, then I consult my field book and look up the general habitats of bird types. For example, swans and ducks tend to hang out in calm waters and open waters in the winter, where raptors can be easily found perching on fence, poles and large trees. If I decide I really want to photograph a specific bird, then it requires me learning about the birds, such as migration patterns, habitats, when they're most active etc... In addition to consulting a field guide, I would also suggest consulting a birding website or group. Birders are notoriously good at posting locations of migrating and rare birds. These sites will of-





ten not report on common birds, but can be a great help if the bird your looking for is rare or expected to migrate soon.

Your best chance at good bird photos is to play the odds, try and find a place where there are a flock of birds, this may be tough if your photographing raptors, since they tend to be fairly solitary, but for other birds, the more that are hang-

ing around your location, the better chance you have of capturing the birds doing what you hoped they would. Now before you get excited and pull out your camera and start taking photos, take a few minutes to assess the area and let the birds get used to you. As with most wildlife they will often see you as a threat and avoid you, the longer you wait the more ha-

bituated the birds will become and not fly away so fast. The other thing you should be assessing is that your in there territory and you should respect there area so PLEASE respect the area, don't go tromping through the bush trying to get to a bird, a lot of birds make there nests on the ground or on branches low to the ground, if you start cutting through brush your very likely going to disturb multiple nests and very likely destroy eggs and the surrounding habitat. So what are you to do if birds are far away, honestly, be patient, birds often patrol territories, if you wait a little bit its likely that a few of them will head your way.

Another option is that if you really really don't care about the type of bird your photographing, then head down to



a city park. Sure there is a lot of seagulls and pigeons, but they are very habituated and you can usually get within about 2 feet of them and

some great close up shots.

You can also get great shots in flight. If you want to photograph small birds on great way is to go near bird feeders

you can often get close to them and they continuously move to nearby trees so your not forced to include the feeder in your photos.

Copyright Infringement

I ran across a few websites on the legal implications of photography. If you take enough pictures eventually someone complain and want you to stop. Should you? If your not sure of when you can and cannot take pictures take a look at these websites. Unfortunately the laws differ between and in some cases within countries. I was only able to find information for the [United States](#), [Canada](#) and the [U.K.](#)

Win a iPod Shuffle & Help out Tips & Tricks Photography

Yep here is your chance to pick-up an iPod shuffle and at the same time help out our Podcast/PDFCast/MagCast (what ever you call it). The Dancing With Elephants Podcast is running a contest called the “Let Them Hear U Contest” Essentially, all you have to do is write a legitimate review about Tips & Tricks Photography on iTunes, or Podcast Alley that is 20 words long. Here is the trick. At the end of your review, add these words “R U Listening?” Then send a copy to dwecontest@gmail.com.

This is a legitimate contest and the grand prize is an iPod Shuffle. Not to bad for twenty words. So thats the benefit for you is the chance to win an iPod Shuffle or a constellation prize, the benefit for us is that we get some great feedback about our podcast through your reviews and with more reviews the better chance a new readers we can obtain.

For more information take a look at the [Dancing With Elephants Podcast](#)

Sensor Cleaning

Written by Jeff Tindall



Your up at 5 am, out the door to get to you pre-determined spot, take 20 minutes to setup the tripod and really begin to wake up. The sun begins to rise and you start shooting like crazy before the crucial 15-30 minutes of great light is over. After your done you go home, download your pictures and notice a couple of black spots in your shot. Yep,

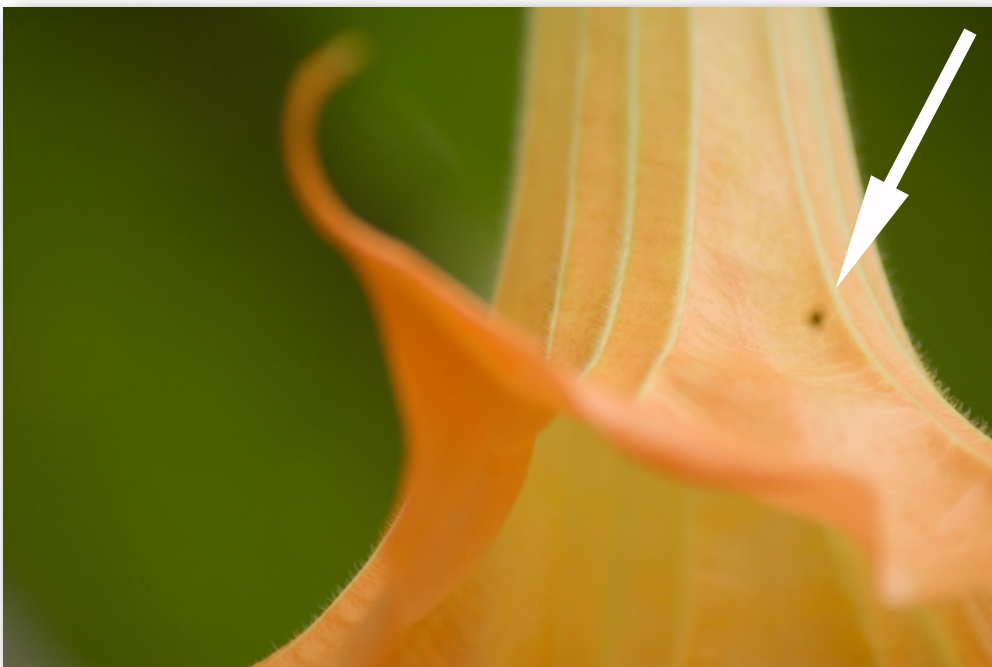
despite all the efforts you have taken some how the dreaded dust has infiltrated your camera and caused you some editing time. Worst of all you know the time has come to that you need to lock up the mirror and clean the sensor. Just the thought of touching the what's typically the most expensive part of a

camera can bring beads of sweat to your forehead.

Well a bit of an exaggeration for those who have owned there DSLR for a year or two, however the first time I had to clean my sensor, similar emotions occurred.

After all your about to start playing around inside the camera and worst of all on the most expensive part of the camera. Now since every camera is different I can't really tell you the best way to clean a sensor, but what I can do is give you some general information that is out there to help you out and hopefully relieve the stress involved in cleaning a sensor.

The first way to avoid the stress of cleaning your sensor is using preventative maintenance. In simple terms, do



your best to minimize the chances that dust can get in. Two great tips for doing that are don't change your lens in a dusty environment and let gravity help you out. Although the first tip likely seems obvious keep in mind a few things, it can be difficult to determine what is a dusty environment, after-all

shining through a crack in a relatively dark room, by being able to see the air where the light can get in usually does a great job of illuminating dust in the air. Now granted that won't be the case in all situations, the other thing I keep an eye on is the breeze. I'm not a big fan of having to change lenses in

that forests and the bottom of large hills are great places to get away from the wind. Or if a shelter or your car is around, try that.

The gravity method is the other technique I use. Now dust is light and easily moved but typically if your in a calm environment dust will move towards the ground.



dust is extremely small. One way to figure out a dusty area that nobody seems to mention is to look for a ray of light. Kind of like the sun

wind. From times that I have done it, I definitely notice dust build up faster than if the air was still. So if its possible find a calm area, I found

Turn your camera so the lens is facing the ground. Then get your lens that you want to put on ready by placing on a table or other suitable loca-

tion and loosen the cap. Now detach your lens from the camera and put it on the table, take the cap off the new lens place it on the old lens and then move the new lens to the camera and attach.

Pretty simple, but remember this. **MOVE SLOWLY.** Lots of people use this method, but feel such a compulsion to avoid dust that they take the lens off as fast as possible and then rocket the new lens to the camera and attach. The problems I've found with doing this is that in moving fast you create air right around the camera opening and often push dust into the camera and then after a few shots, the dust is on

your sensor. If you move slowly, you can often avoid this.

Well no matter how hard you try you just need to accept the fact that dust is a part of the photography game

and you will at some point see a black dot show up on your picture. When I see this, the first thing I do is leave the lens on and look at the filters and front of the lens. In other words make sure the dust really is on the sensor and not the filter or lens itself. I carry around lens cleaning paper in my bag so I can pull out a sheet and give the filters and lens a quick cleaning. The upside to doing this is even when the dust indeed is on the sensor, It keeps me on top of general cleaning of the glass to ensure clean sharp pictures. Well after cleaning the glass, you finally con-

firmed the dust is on the sensor, what now.

Before you even think about grabbing a sensor swap and wiping it across the CCD, try using a blower first. Most dust that gets on your sensor is laying lightly on the surface, a blower can usually remove all the dust without having to touch it. Now when I say blower I'm NOT talking about compressed air. It may be very effective at removing dust from between your keyboard, but it can be dangerous to your sensor. A compressed air canister if tilted slightly can spray fluids (I'm assuming the propellant

or liquid air) and the last thing you want to do is soak the inside of your camera with that stuff. The blower I'm talking about is the hand driven one for about \$10-20 CND. You can find



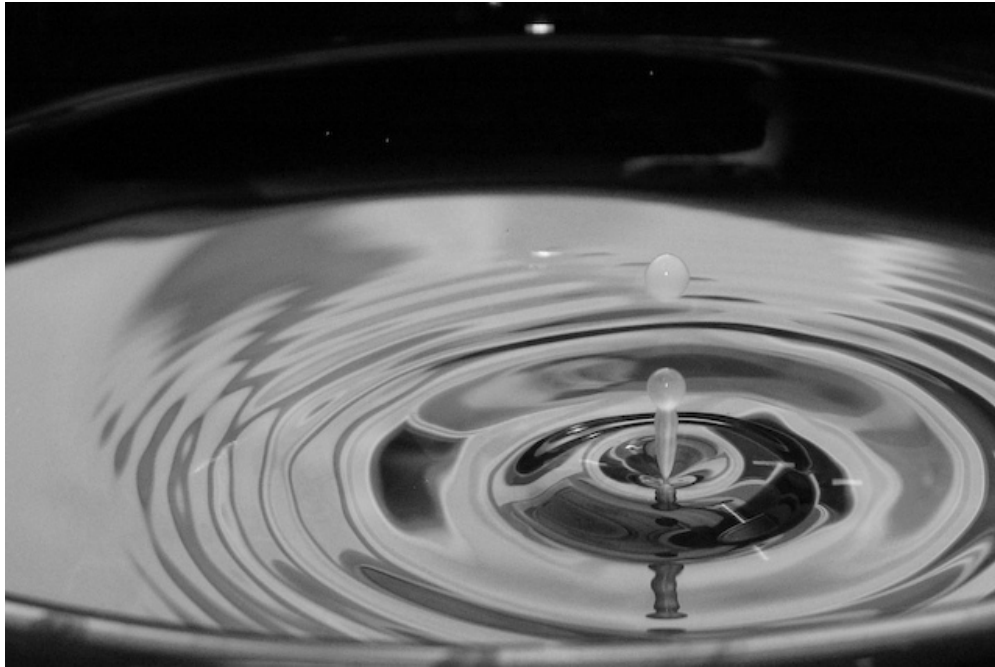
them at pretty much any store that sells cameras and the one I recommend would be one with a separate valve with a filter. So the air replaced to the blower goes through a filter removing dust. Blowers with single openings can often suck in dust from the air and then blow it right onto your sensor. When using the

blower, use the gravity method so any dust that's blown off the sensor can fall down and out of the camera housing. I also recommend a few seconds of wait time between blowing air onto the sensor to allow the removed dust to get out of the way and not be blown back in.

Honestly, the above techniques should often solve the problem around 80-90% of the time. Up until the beginning of April which ironically sparked the idea to write this

article, I've managed to not touch my sensor since August of 2006.

If you do have to clean the sensor there are a couple of techniques you could use. The most common one is to use a sensor swab and some cleaning solution. If you do need to swab the sensor don't panic take your time and



some comfort that in most DSLR's you're actually swabbing a glass covering and not the actual CCD. [Here is a link to a good article on how to typically clean a sensor from Fuji.](#) Although the instructions are for a specific camera it does give a good idea of how to swab.

Another method that recently hit the mainstream for cleaning CCD is using Discofilm. Although I don't really recommend the idea I thought I would mention it. Discofilm was originally designed to clean LP's (records, the music things before 8-track tapes)! It's water based and you basically paint it on the sensor,

let it dry and pull off using a paper tab you also painted on. Yah I know, sounds a little extreme. I don't want to focus too much on this technique because I really can't condone the use of it

yet, since I

haven't been able to try it out. If you are interested in learning more about it take a [here is the webpage](#) of the person who discovered the new use of this old product. I could see Discofilm being a good sensor cleaner if you're really obsessed about getting every microscopic particle of dust

or if you ever run into a situation where your camera accumulates a large amount of dust. In my opinion the 1 hour drying time required doesn't seem feasible and the idea and associated stress involved with painting your sensor with a chemical (even water based) seems a little risky.

I guess the last piece of advice I have is try not to get too obsessed with dust. It's really easy once you looked at the sensor and spent a few minutes to become obsessed with having to remove every spec of dust leading to a lot of time and sensor swabs wasted. If you can't see the dust on the LCD or it's not in a location that you care about like the edges of the photo that are usually cropped, then don't worry about it go out and take pictures, rather than becoming frustrated.

One thing that I didn't like when I had to clean my sensor was the cost of the products. I was shocked that a three pack of sensor swabs costs \$15 CND. These swabs consist of a glorified plastic popsicle stick, a piece of cloth about an inch square that's attached with a small rubber band. Seriously, the production costs couldn't be more than a dime each. If you want a cheaper alternative, pick up one swab and a package of PEC Pads, these are sheets made by the same company, however come in much larger sheets and packages of 100 for around \$10 CND. When you need to clean the CCD, just fold one of these sheets rubber band it to the plastic stick and viola you have a sensor swab for about 50 cents. In talking to a couple of camera shops this is the technique they use when cleaning CCD's brought in by customers.

I guess the last thing to mention is more of a caveat, although I don't consider sensor cleaning that difficult of a task everyone has different abilities. With that in mind I must qualify my article by saying that the above tips in the article are techniques I use and find useful, they may not be for everyone so if you do decide to employ these techniques, you do so at your own risk.

If sensor cleaning really is a stressful situation for you I would suggest taking your camera into a camera store and get someone to clean it. Better yet, ask to be there and have them show you what they do to get a better idea of how it's done. After seeing the techniques it will likely put you more at ease and not be so scary the next time it needs to be done.

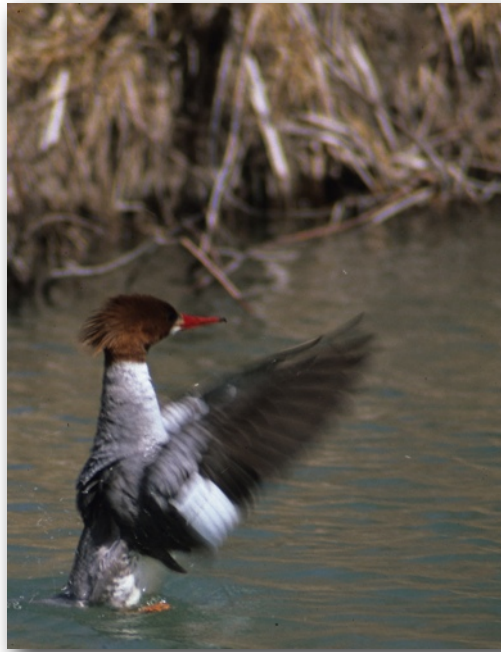
Motion Sensor Triggering

Written by Jeff Tindall

Well firstly, I should apologize to the Canon, Pentax and any other non Nikon users. This tip is described for Nikons (in particular, the D70, since I shoot that), however although I don't have specific instructions for other brands of cameras, I imagine that the setup would likely be very similar. So give it a shot no matter what camera you have! I'm not really sure how practical or useful it is. So I consider this more of an interesting tidbit that can be experimented with. The Nikon D70 have a hidden motion sensor trigger (also called trap focusing). The shutter is triggered when there is movement at the focus target or if something comes into the focus

target. Here is how you do it:

Set your camera to AF-S (auto-focus 'AF' single shot 'S'), now set the auto-focus lock to on. By doing this



the camera is now set to auto-focus. Now if you hold the shutter button all the way down, the camera

is forced to wait for a subject to move into your focus area and once the camera senses something has entered the area, it immediately focuses and triggers. If you set the camera to manual or move the focus ring this can trick the camera into thinking something entered the focus area and it will trigger.

I haven't had a lot of time to play with trap focusing using this method so I'm not sure how fast or accurate it can get. It could potentially be useful for capturing lightning (provided the camera can react fast enough and the lightning bolt lasts long enough, but it could also be good for capturing fast moving objects like birds.